

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, HEADED "TERROR IN WASHINGTON."
2. A WEEK AGO TODAY, THE GOVERNMENT OF CHILE REVOKED THE CITIZENSHIP OF ORLANDO LETELIER, WHO HAD BEEN AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES AND HAD HELD THREE CABINET POSTS DURING THE LATE PRESIDENT SALVADOR ALLENDE'S POPULAR UNITY COALITION. THE DECREE CHARGED THAT MR. LETELIER, WHO HAD MOVED TO WASHINGTON LAST YEAR, WAS "INTERFERING WITH NORMAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO CHILE."
3. YESTERDAY, MR. LETELIER AND A WOMAN RESEARCH ASSOCIATE WERE KILLED WHEN A BOMB PLANTED IN HIS AUTOMOBILE EXPLODED WHILE HE WAS DRIVING ALONG WASHINGTON'S EMBASSY ROW. A PRIVATE ORGANIZATION THAT ADVOCATES SUSPENDING ECONOMIC AID TO CHILE PROMPTLY CHARGED THAT THE MURDER WAS PART OF A

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BROAD EFFORT BY CHILE'S SECRET POLICE TO SILENCE CHILEAN

EXILES HOSTILE TO THE MILITARY JUNTA, WHILE THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT ITSELF REPUDIATED "THIS OUTRAGEOUS ACT OF TERRORISM" AND REQUESTED AN EXHAUSTIVE INVESTIGATION.

4. MR. LETELIER, WHILE NO EXTREMIST, WAS AN ARTICULATE AND EFFECTIVE CRITIC OF THE JUNTA. HE HAD EXPERIENCED FIRST-HAND ITS INDIFFERENCE TO LEGAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS DURING A YEAR OF IMPRISONMENT WITHOUT TRIAL OR CHARGE, AFTER THE OVERTHROW AND DEATH OF PRESIDENT ALLENDE IN 1973. AS A FORMER SENIOR ECONOMIST FOR THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, HE WAS DEVASTATING IN HIS CRITICISM OF THE MILITARY REGIME'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY EFFORT.

5. IN AN ARTICLE IN THE NATION LAST MONTH, MR. LETELIER BITTERLY CRITICIZED GOVERNMENTS, BANKS AND INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL AGENCIES WILLING TO LEND CHILE LARGE SUMS ON "TECHNICAL CRITERIA" WITHOUT REGARD FOR THE JUNTA'S OUTRAGES AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS. "IT IS NONSENSICAL," HE WROTE, "THAT THOSE WHO INSPIRE, SUPPORT OR FINANCE THAT ECONOMIC POLICY SHOULD TRY TO PRESENT THEIR ADVOCACY AS RESTRICTED TO 'TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS,' WHILE PRETENDING TO REJECT THE SYSTEM OF TERROR IT REQUIRES TO SUCCEED."

6. IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE THAT EVEN AS HAM-HANDED A REGIME AS CHILE'S JUNTA WOULD ORDER THE MURDER OF SO EMINENT AN OPPONENT AS MR. LETELIER IN THE CAPITAL OF THE UNITED STATES WHERE IT HAS WORKED HARD RECENTLY TO IMPROVE ITS IMAGE AND ON WHOSE LARGESSE IT SO HEAVILY DEPENDS. WHETHER THIS VICIOUS MURDER WAS COMMITTED BY AGENTS OF THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT OR BY LEFT EXTREMISTS UNWILLING TO STOP AT ANYTHING IN ORDER FURTHER TO DISCREDIT THAT GOVERNMENT, AMERICAN AUTHORITIES CANNOT AFFORD TO OVERLOOK EVEN THE MOST REMOTE POSSIBILITIES IN THE INVESTIGATION OF MR. LETELIER'S DEATH.
(END TEXT.) ROBINSON

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